

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04

TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AGR-05 NSC-05

SS-15 TAR-01 L-02 H-02 /089 W
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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8609

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 509

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EEC, MED

SUBJECT: EC MEDITERRANEAN POLICY

REF: A. EC BRUSSELS 1713; B. RABAT 1633

1.SUMMARY: EC NEGOTIATORS MET WITH TUNISIAN AND MOROCCAN DELEGATIONS MARCH 21-25 IN THE LATEST ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO CONCLUSION OF AGREEMENTS UNDER THE EC'S "GLOBAL" MEDITERRANEAN POLICY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE TWO SIDES ARE CLOSE ON MOST OF THE REMAINING ISSUES BUT THAT TUNISIA AND MOROCCO HAVE, IN THIS LATEST ROUND, ASKED FOR ADDITIONAL AGRICULTURAL CONCESSIONS AND THAT THEREFORE IT HAS BEEN AGREED TO PAUSE FOR A "PERIOD OF REFLECTION". THE EC COUNCIL (FOREIGN MINISTERS) ARE EXPECTED TO DISCUSS THIS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AT THEIR APRIL 14 MEETING. CONTACTS IN THE UK PERMREP AND THE TUNISIAN EMBASSY EXPECT ANOTHER AND PERHAPS FINAL ROUND OF TALKS COULD THEN TAKE PLACE SOON AFTERWARD. OUR TUNISIAN AND UK
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SOURCES ALSO INDICATED THAT THE NEW ACCORDS WILL NOT

CONTAIN ANY CONTRACTUAL RECIPROCITY, LEAVING THE QUESTION OPEN FOR REVIEW AT A LATER DATE. ALGERIA IS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH THE EC COMMISSION FOR ITS SESSION IN THE CURRENT SERIES APRIL 10-11. END SUMMARY.

2. DELEGATIONS REPRESENTING TUNISIA AND MOROCCO MET WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (COMMISSION NEGOTIATORS WITH MEMBER STATE ADVISERS) MARCH 21-23 AND MARCH 24-25, RESPECTIVELY. COMMISSION PARTICIPANTS HAVE BEEN UNAVAILABLE DUE TO EASTER HOLIDAYS BUT WE HAVE CONTACTED SOURCES IN THE UK PERMREP AND THE TUNISIAN EMBASSY WHO HAVE GIVEN US A PRELIMINARY BRIEFING ON THE STATUS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. AGRICULTURAL SNAG: NEGOTIATIONS HIT AS LEAST A MOMENTARY SNAG OVER TUNISIAN AND MOROCCAN REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL AGRICULTURAL CONCESSIONS. WHILE COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS ON OTHER ISSUES (ACCESS TO EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK RESOURCES, RULES OF ORIGIN, MANPOWER, ETC.) ARE REPORTEDLY NEAR, THIS LATEST ROUND PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT NEW REQUESTS FOR AGRICULTURAL CONCESSIONS WITH THE EC MANDATE IN THIS SECTOR ALREADY STRETCHED TO ABOUT ITS LIMIT. TUNISIA REPORTEDLY WANTS BETTER TREATMENT FOR THREE OR FOUR PRODUCTS (UNSPECIFIED, BUT WE BELIEVE THEY INCLUDE POTATOES, ASPARAGUS AND TOMATO CONCENTRATES). TUNISIA ALSO REQUESTS CONTINUATION OF THE EXISTING PROTOCOL 17 (TREATY OF ROME) CONCESSIONS FOR PREFERENTIAL ACCESS TO THE FRENCH MARKET (A PROBLEM FOR ITALY) AND ITS FUTURE BROADENING TO INCLUDE THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND TUNISIA WANTS TREATMENT EQUAL TO THAT GRANTED TO THE OTHER MAGHREB COUNTRIES (E.G. "ALGERIAN" TREATMENT FOR WINE, "MOROCCAN" TREATMENT FOR FRUIT JUICES).

4. THE MOROCCAN DELEGATION ALSO PRESENTED A LENGTHY LIST OF ADDITIONAL REQUESTS FOR AGRICULTURAL CONCESSIONS. THE CURRENT EC NEGOTIATING MANDATE (JULY 1974) IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO MEET THESE NEW MAGHREB DEMANDS. AS A RESULT, THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOW IN A "PERIOD OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REFLECTION". FOR ITS PART, THE EC COUNCIL HAS ON ITS AGENDA FOR APRIL 14 THE "OVERALL MEDITERRANEAN APPROACH" AND OUR UK SOURCE EXPECTS THAT THE COMMISSION MAY SEEK TO SECURE SOME ADDITIONAL, THOUGH MINOR, CONCESSIONS TO PERMIT THE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE SPEEDILY CONCLUDED. OUR TUNISIAN CONTACT THOUGHT THAT ANOTHER AND PROBABLY FINAL ROUND COULD TAKE PLACE SOON THEREAFTER.

5. ON FRESH ORANGES, THE MAGHREB COUNTRIES REPORTEDLY ARE STRONGLY AGAINST COMMUNITY INTENTIONS TO NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN THE PREFERENCES FOR SPAIN AND ISRAEL, ON THE ONE HAND, AND THE MORE FAVORABLE PREFERENCES FOR THE MAGHREB, ON THE OTHER. ALSO, THE MAGHREB WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE REFERENCE PRICES (MINIMUM IMPORT PRICES) INCREASED.

6. RECIPROCITY: ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS, THE ISSUE OF TRADE RECIPROCITY (REVERSE PREFERENCES) IS BEING HANDLED AS FOLLOWS: THE AGREEMENTS CURRENTLY BEING NEGOTIATED WILL NOT CONTAIN ANY CONTRACTUAL RECIPROCITY ON THE PART OF THE MAGHREB. IN THIS SENSE, THEY WILL PARALLEL THE TERMS CONTAINED IN THE CONVENTION OF LOME. THE MAGHREB STATES ARE REPORTEDLY PREPARED TO "TALK EVENTUAL RECIPROCITY" BUT OUR TUNISIAN CONTACT SIAD THIS SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE "CLAUSE DE REVISION" WHICH PROVIDES FOR REVIEW OF THE ACCORD AT FIVE-YEAR INTERVALS BEGINNING IN 1978. AT THAT TIME (OR 1983, 1988, ETC.), TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE MAGHREB COUNTRIES, THE POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT SOME FORM OF RECIPROCITY MIGHT BE GRANTED. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, BOTH OUR UK CONTACT AND OUR TUNISIAN SOURCE INDICATED THAT WHAT IS EMERGING IN THE TRADE REGIME WILL BE ALONG THE LINES OF THE ACP AGREEMENT-- I.E., NO OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE RECIPROCITY BUT THE POSSIBILITY OF DOING SO VOLUNTARILY. (EMBASSIES ALGIERS, RABAT AND TUNIS MAY WISH TO CONFIRM THE READING WE GET HERE IN CONNECTION WITH ELIGIBILITY FOR US/GSP.)

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7. NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE: WITH RESPECT TO THE ARAB BOYCOTT, THE EC CONTINUES TO PUSH FOR INCLUSION OF APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE SAFEGUARDING COMMUNITY ENTERPRISES FROM DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT ON THE BASIS OF COMMERCIAL LINKS WITH ISRAEL. MYERSON

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